A LETTER out of *Ireland*, from an Eminent Divine of the Church of *England*, giving a full and true Account of the Sickness, Death and Funeral, of the late Bishop of *Chester*.

Licensed July 4. 1689.

Reverend Sir,

IT is my certain Knowledge of your being a Kinsman, and Chaplain to, (and what's more, your being esteemed by) the late Lord Bishop of *Chester*, (for I have it under his own Hand writing) which makes me give you not the Trouble, but Satisfaction of this long Letter; because I believe you would be glad to hear how he was received by us in *Ireland*, and what kind of End he made; which there is none so capable of giving you an Account of as my self: For he was pleased, after he came to *Dublin*, to converse very freely with me before he fell Sick, and to make use of my Services and Assistances in the time of his Sickness.

I will begin my little Narrative of this great Man, with his Landing in *Ireland* in the late King's Company, which was upon *Tuesday, March* 12. The *Sunday* following, being at *Cork*, he received the Blessed Sacrament at the Hands of the Lord Bishop of *Cork*; came to *Dublin* with the King upon *Palm-Sunday*, and on *Easter* Day, and the *Octaves* of *Easter* he again received the Holy Sacrament at *Christ-Church* here, from the Bishop of *Meath*; to which Church his Lordship went daily to Prayers. 'Twas upon *Tuesday* in *Easter* Week that I was first known to his Lordship, meeting him accidentally at a Person of Quality's House at Dinner; From which time he was pleased to admit me into his Acquaintance, and to discourse with me in his Lodgings several times very freely. That Day he complained a little of his being troubled with the *Dysentery*, (which we here call the Country Disease) but used no means to cure it all that Week. And upon *Tuesday, April* 4. hearing that his Lordship was ill, I went to visit him, (as I did at least once a Day after) and found him so much indisposed, that he was hardly able to go with another Gentleman and my Self in a Coach to Dinner: But when he came to the Place he eat nothing but a little Bread and Cheese. After Dinner he grew worse; we got him home with some trouble, and laid him down on his Bed so ill, that he was scarce able to speak to us. He was much averse to meddle with Physicians, I therefore recommended to him an Able and Ingenious Apothecary of my Acquaintance, whom he accepted of; but finding no benefit by his services, Dr. *Willoughby* was consulted with, who being unable to visit him, sent directions what he would have him take: Which not succeeding, according to our Wishes, the next Day Dr. *Assole* was sent for, who approved of what the other Physicians had prescribed, and added further directions of his own. But all this doing no good, the Day following Dr. *Sylvius*, a Third Physician, was made use of, who, upon his First Visit, told us he was a Dead Man; yet prescribed such things for him, as were proper in this Distemper, which he accordingly took, as he had done what the other Doctors ordered.

On *Sunday* Morning his Lordship sent for me, and while I was with him the Minister of the Parish, Dr. *Foy*, came to visit him, whom before us both (there being likewise a Jesuite, one of the King's Chaplains, and several others present) he voluntarily declared himself to be a Member of the Communion of the Church of *England*, in which he had always lived, and wherein, by the Grace of God, he intended to die, whatever the World had said, or might say of him to the contrary. He desired then to have the Churches Prayers said, which accordingly he had, and he joyned in them very Devoutly. That Afternoon he was visited by the Bishop of *Meath*, who both Prayed with him, and was after left alone with him for some time. I went again late that Evening to visit him; and offering my Service to stay with him that Night, because I saw him very Weak; He accepted of it, and desired me to administer the Blessed Sacrament to him in the Morning, which I did, having before said the Churches Office of Visitation, received his Confession, and given him at his desire the Churches Absolution.

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During the performance of those Offices, he demeaned himself with all the Signs of Zeal, Devotion and Presence of Mind, as became one of his Character, and as could be expected, considering his mighty Indisposition. His Lordship desired me the next Morning to stay with him, but my attendance at my own Church calling me away, I sent Dr. *Fox*, who waited on him in my Absence. I visited him again about Noon, where in the Afternoon, while we were at Church, the Titular Bishop of *Chester*, the Dean of *Christ-Church*, made him a visit, having taken that time, I am apt to believe, in hopes to find him without Company, and weak enough to be imposed on by them.

After the First Civilities were past, one of them in Latin desired him to be mindful of Eternity, and to prepare for Death. His Servant being present, answered them, That his Lordship had prepared himself already. They afterwards told him in Latin, There was but one God, one Faith, one Church: To which the Bishop replied, *That he believed so, and that he hoped he had made his Peace with God.* They again repeated, That there was but one God, one Church; so intending (as we may presume) to enlarge upon that Subject: He Answered them somewhat short, *I know all this as well as you, but I am not able to answer you for the failing of my Spirits; and therefore I desire you to forbear talking with me any more about this, for I have done already what I thought necessary for my Salvation.* Thereupon they seeing they could not effect any thing with him, nor engage him in Discourse, took their leaves, and they themselves gave out, That the Bishop of *Chester* was dying, and that he would dye a Protestant. I waited on his Lordship again that Evening, and staid with him till 'twas late; and being sent for by him, about Four the next Morning, I went to him, and found him near Death, but he had the use of his Reason, Senses and Speech; for after I came to his Bed-side, he said twice, —*I shall die.* I Prayed with him then, and a little before Seven that Morning I commended his Soul to the Almighty.

As soon as he was Dead, I ordered his Lordships Servant to acquaint the Earl of *Powis*, and the Lord Bishop of *Meath*, with his Lordships Death, who, with the Earl of *Longford*, took care for his Funeral after this manner.

On *Tuesday*, *April* 16, early, his Body was carried from the House were he died, to the Bishop of *Meaths*, which was near, where several Rooms were hung in Black; and that where the Body lay, was furnished with many Lights in Sconces, and Eight large Wax Tapers on Stands about the Body, which was covered with a fair Velvet Pall. In the Afternoon all the Nobility, Clergy, Judges and Gentry, of both Religions, that were in Town, amongst whom were the Earl of *Powis*, and the Lord Chancellor — came thither. And about Six in the Evening his Body was carried in a Velvet Herse drawn with Six Horses, Cloathed in Black, and attended by the King at Arms, the aforesaid Company in near Thirty Coaches, and a multitude of Common People to *Christ-Church*, where the Subdean and Choir met the Body at the Church Door, and Sung it into the Choir, which was mightily crowded. The Service was Solemnly performed with several Anthems, and the Body afterwards Inter'd in the *North-East* end of the Choir, by the Lord Bishop *Meath* in his Episcopal Habit.

I have this further to add concerning his Lordship, that (as he himself told me) he read the Liturgy of our Church, in his Lodgings, at St. *Germains*, to such Protestants as came thither to him; and while he was travelling in *Ireland*, when he had not the opportunity of going to the Publick. That except when he was at Court, his Conversation was chiefly amongst Protestants, by whom he was frequently both visited and treated. Two of his Physicians and his Apothecary were Protestants, and so was the Family where he Lodged, with which he had been heretofore acquainted in *London*. He was observed to be very ready to speak to the late King (and was still Successful in his Addresses) in behalf of Distressed, or other Protestants. And the *Friday* before the late King left *Dublin*, the Bishop bought, at his Majesties Command, a Quarto Bible and Common Prayer Book, of the *Cambridge* Print, for him to carry with him to the *North*, for his Private Devotions.

From all which (not to mention many other Circumstances) we may without doubt conclude both that he was a firm Protestant, and that we of this Kingdom have received a great loss in him. His deportment in his Sickness was becoming his Condition, and the Greatness of his Spirit; and considering, that for near Three Days before he died he was severely afflicted with a total stoppage of Urin, beyond the help of Goa Powders, *Goddard's* Drops, and all that the Physicians could do to relieve him. — He bore his Sickness very patiently. And therefore seeing he wanted nothing either for Soul or Body while he was with us, you, and the rest of his Lordships Friends in *England* have less reason to be Afflicted at the Tidings of his Death than to bless God that he died amongst us, and made so Honourable an End.

Yours *M. Hewson.*

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